



# Kentucky Derby Update

Saturday, April 25, 2026

## COX WORKS TOWARD DERBY 152; CHIP HONCHO BOWS OUT ALLOWING LITMUS TEST IN

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, April 25, 2026) – Trainer **Brad Cox**'s trio of Kentucky Derby hopefuls – **Commandment**, **Fulleffort** and **Further Ado** – highlighted a busy morning at Churchill Downs a week out from Kentucky Derby 152.

Working during the 7:15-7:30 (all times Eastern) training period reserved for Kentucky Derby and Oaks prospects, the Cox trio was joined by **Chester Broman**'s **Right to Party** (five furlongs in 1:01.20) for trainer **Kenny McPeck**.

Also working was **Leland Ackerley Racing**, **James Sherwood**, **Jode Shupe** and **John Cilia**'s **Chip Honcho** going five furlongs in 1:00.80 though he was taken out of Derby consideration, a defection that opened the door for **Litmus Test** to draw into the main body of the 20-horse field.

The Cox workers were **Wathnan Racing**'s **Commandment** (five furlongs in 1:01.40 in company with the 4-year-old maiden **Rock Music** over a good track) with **Edvin "Jefe" Vargas** up, **St. Elias Stable** and **Starlight Racing**'s **Fulleffort**, with **Vargas** up, (five furlongs in :59 over a fast track) and **Spendthrift Farm**'s **Further Ado** (five furlongs in 1:00 over a good track) with **John Velazquez** up.

**Right to Party** was ridden by **Robby Albarado** in his morning work over a fast track.

Scheduled to work Sunday are **Mike and Kay Kay Ball**'s **Chief Wallabee** for trainer **Bill Mott** with **Junior Alvarado** up, **Speedway Stables**' **Potente** for trainer **Bob Baffert** with **Juan Hernandez** up, the **Pin Oak Stud** duo of **Albus** and **Incredibolt** for trainer **Riley Mott**, **Reddam Racing**'s **Pavlovian** for trainer **Doug O'Neill**, **Dutch Girl Holdings** and **Irving Ventures**' **Intrepido** for trainer **Jeff Mullins**.

Working toward the Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI) Saturday morning was **Red White and Blue Racing**'s **Pashmina** who covered a half-mile over a track listed as fast on her own in :49.60 with **Jesse Sauter** aboard for trainer **Rob Atras**.

### KENTUCKY DERBY UPDATE

**ALBUS/INCREDIBOLT** – Trainer **Riley Mott** had an extra day to work with regarding final Derby works for **Pin Oak Stud**'s **Albus** and **Incredibolt** and he opted to use it by pushing the works back to Sunday morning.

"The track was a little heavy this morning," Mott said before sending **Albus** and **Incredibolt** out for mile and a half gallops. **Antonio Garcia** was on **Albus**, the **Wood Memorial** (GII) winner and **Charlotte O'Connell** partnered **Incredibolt**, winner of the **Virginia Derby**.

**CHIEF WALLABEE** – **Mike and Kay Kay Ball**'s **Chief Wallabee** visited the paddock under **Marvin Orantes** and galloped a mile and a half.

Trainer **Bill Mott** plans to work **Chief Wallabee** Sunday morning.

"That's the plan," Mott said. "The weather is looking a little sketchy for Monday."

**CHIP HONCHO** – Trainer **Steve Asmussen** reported that **Chip Honcho** would bypass Kentucky Derby 152 and target the **Preakness Stakes** (GI) on Saturday, May 16 at **Laurel Park**.

**COMMANDMENT/FULLEFFORT/FURTHER ADO** – Trainer **Brad Cox**'s Kentucky Derby trio of **Wathnan Racing**'s **Commandment**, **St. Elias Stable** and **Starlight Racing**'s **Fulleffort** and **Spendthrift Farm**'s **Further Ado** all recorded their final published works Saturday morning prior to Kentucky Derby 152.

**Further Ado** was first to the track at 5:15 a.m., breezing five furlongs in 1:00 with Hall of Fame jockey **John Velazquez** aboard. The **Blue Grass** (GI) winner worked through an opening quarter-mile in :24.60 and galloped out six furlongs in 1:13.

"I was very pleased with how he went," Velazquez said. "I started paying attention to him after riding against him at **Keeneland** in his maiden race. He's a very nice horse."

Minutes later, **Florida Derby** (GI) winner **Commandment** worked five furlongs in 1:01.40 outside stablemate **Rock Music**. The colt covered his opening quarter-mile in :25.20 and galloped out six furlongs in 1:14.40.

"He's a unique horse and doesn't do a whole lot in his training, but his move today was exactly what we wanted a week out from the Derby," Cox said. "You could tell in his gallop-out once he got by his workmate, his ears went up like he knew he was finished with the work."

During the 7:15 a.m. Kentucky Derby exclusive training window, **Fulleffort** worked five furlongs in :59. The **Jeff Ruby Steaks** (GIII) winner posted fractions of :12.80, :24.60, :36.20 and :47.40 before galloping out six furlongs in 1:11.60.

"He's continued to impress us on the dirt, and today was no different," Cox said. "He's worked like a different horse over this surface than when he was here as a 2-year-old."

**DANON BOURBON** – **Danox Co. Ltd.**'s **Danon Bourbon** made his first appearance over the **Churchill Downs** oval Saturday morning, jogging one lap accompanied by a pony. He's scheduled to have a similar training session Sunday.

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**EMERGING MARKET** – **Klaravich Stables' Emerging Market** walked Barn 25 Saturday following his four-furlong move in :47.60 Friday at Churchill Downs.

**GOLDEN TEMPO** – **Phipps Stable** and **St. Elias Stable's Golden Tempo** arrived at Churchill Downs Saturday morning at 8:30 from Keeneland.

Trained by **Cherie DeVaux**, Golden Tempo had worked a half-mile in company in :47.40 Friday morning at Keeneland.

**GREAT WHITE** – **Three Chimneys Farm** and trainer **John Ennis' Great White** arrived at Churchill Downs after 8 a.m. after vanning from Lexington this morning.

**INTREPIDO** – **Dutch Girl Holdings** and **Irving Ventures' Intrepido** did a double tour of the big Churchill Downs oval Saturday morning during the special training sessions for Derby and Oaks horses between 7:15 and 7:30. Regular exercise rider **Alejandro Galindo** was in the irons.

"We jogged a little and galloped some," Galindo offered back at Barn 41. "He felt just fine."

Galindo also noted that the colt's regular rider, **Hector I. Berrios**, would be onsite to handle his final drill Sunday morning.

**LITMUS TEST/POTENTE** – Trainer **Bob Baffert's** duo for Derby 152 – **Speedway Stables' Potente** and **SF Racing, Starlight Racing** and partners' **Litmus Test** – moved forward toward the mile and a quarter classic in their own way Saturday morning at Churchill Downs.

Potente had exercise rider **Humberto Gomez** in the boot for a gallop of a mile and three-eighths during the special training period between 7:15 and 7:30.

Litmus Test, who turned in a sharp five-furlong drill in :59 Thursday under rider **Martin Garcia**, was only a shedrow walker Saturday.

Potente is scheduled to put in his final work for the Run for the Roses Sunday morning with regular rider **Juan Hernandez** in from California to do the steering.

Litmus Test was listed as No. 21 and not in the big race early Saturday morning. Baffert was asked what "Plan B" for his colt was should he not make the race.

"No Plan B," the conditioner stated emphatically, and presciently.

As it turned out there was no need for a Plan B. Litmus Test is a go and he'll have Garcia on his back for the 10-furlong classic.

**PAVLOVIAN** – **Reddam Racing's Pavlovian**, the homebred gray/roan by the California stallion Pavel, put in a one-mile jog Saturday morning during the 7:15 to 7:30 special training session for Derby and Oaks horses at Churchill Downs. Stable overseer **Tony Romero** was at the controls for the exercise.

The colt will be making his 11<sup>th</sup> start in Derby 152, the most of any runner in the 20-horse lineup. But first he'll have to put in a final work tomorrow morning -- with **Edwin**

**Maldonado**, the California-based rider who'll handle him in the Derby, on board -- and trainer **Doug O'Neill** watching from the backside.

Romero, who has been with the colt since Day one, passed on a bit of information that might be of interest to fans should the weather turn wet heading into next Saturday's Run for the Roses.

"He likes the mud," Romero offered. "If it rains, we'll like it."

**RENEGADE** – **Robert and Lawana Low** and **Repole Stable's Renegade** arrived at Churchill Downs at 2:45 Saturday morning after departing Palm Beach Downs in South Florida at 8:20 Friday morning.

Trainer **Todd Pletcher** is scheduled to arrive in Louisville Saturday afternoon.

**RIGHT TO PARTY** – **Chester Broman Sr.'s Right to Party** worked five furlongs in 1:01.40 Saturday morning in company with **Very Connected** for trainer **Kenny McPeek**. The colt worked with exercise rider/assistant trainer **Robby Albarado** inside his stablemate in his final major move prior to Kentucky Derby 152.

"I put him inside today," McPeek said. "I think he is more focused inside. I wasn't worried about time today, happy to get this last work in."

McPeek said the colt had a couple of loose caps in his mouth earlier in the week that affected his training, but after having horse dentist **Marty Hissle** address the issue, he moved much better Saturday.

**Chris Elliott** has the mount in Kentucky Derby 152.

**SILENT TACTIC** – **John Oxley's Silent Tactic** returned to the track a little before 6 a.m. to jog for 15 minutes in the mile chute with **Dass Garcia** aboard.

The Mark Casse trainee had worked a half-mile in :48 on Thursday and walked the shedrow Friday.

**SIX SPEED** – UAE Derby (GII) runner-up **Six Speed** galloped during the 7:15 a.m. training window with **Declan Cannon** aboard. The colt trains in a hood and shadow roll and will be ridden in Kentucky Derby 152 by **Brian Hernandez Jr.**, who won the 2024 Kentucky Derby aboard **Mystik Dan**.

**SO HAPPY** – Santa Anita Derby (GI) winner **So Happy** walked the shedrow following his Friday morning breeze at Churchill Downs.

**THE PUMA** – Florida Derby (GI) runner-up **The Puma** galloped about 1 ½ miles Saturday morning at Churchill Downs for trainer **Gustavo Delgado Sr.**

**WONDER DEAN (JPN)** – **Yoshinari Yamamoto's Wonder Dean** had an easy day Saturday, walking around Barn 17 following his six-furlong work Friday as he continues preparations for Kentucky Derby 152.

**SHAPING UP: THE \$5 MILLION KENTUCKY DERBY PRESENTED BY WOODFORD RESERVE (GI)** – Here is the top 20 preference list for the \$5 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (GI) in alphabetical order (with jockey and trainer): **Albus** (Manny Franco, Riley Mott); **Chief Wallabee** (Junior Alvarado, Bill Mott); **Commandment** (Luis Saez, Brad Cox); **Danon Bourbon** (Atsuya Nishimura, Manabu Ikezoe); **Emerging Market** (Flavien Prat, Chad Brown); **Further Ado** (John Velazquez, Brad Cox); **Fulleffort** (Tyler Gaffalione, Brad Cox); **Golden Tempo** (Jose Ortiz, Cherie DeVaux); **Incredibolt** (Jaime Torres, Riley Mott); **Intrepido** (Hector Berrios, Jeff Mullins); **Litmus Test** (Martin Garcia, Bob Baffert); **Pavlovian** (Edwin Maldonado, Doug O'Neill); **Potente** (Juan Hernandez, Bob Baffert); **Renegade** (Irad Ortiz Jr., Todd Pletcher); **Right to Party** (Chris Elliott, Kenny McPeck); **Silent Tactic** (Cristian Torres, Mark Casse); **Six Speed** (Brian Hernandez Jr., Bhupat Seemar); **So Happy** (Mike Smith, Mark Glatt); **The Puma** (Javier Castellano, Gustavo Delgado); **Wonder Dean (JPN)** (Ryusei Sakai, Daisuke Takayanagi). Also Eligibles: **Great White** (Alex Achard, John Ennis); **Ocelli** (Joe Ramos, Whit Beckman); **Robusta** (Emisael Jaramillo, Doug O'Neill); **Corona de Oro** (Brian Hernandez Jr., Dallas Stewart)

#### LONGINES KENTUCKY OAKS UPDATE

**ALWAYS A RUNNER** – Gazelle (GIII) winner **Always a Runner** walked trainer **Chad Brown's** Barn 25 Saturday morning following her Friday half-mile move in :48.40.

**BELLA BALLERINA** – Godolphin's **Bella Ballerina** walked in trainer **Brendan Walsh's** barn Saturday morning and is expected to go back to the track Sunday.

**BOTTLE OF ROUGE/EXPLORA** – Pegram, Watson and **Weitman's Explora** and **Jill Baffert's Bottle of Rouge** both stretched their legs Saturday morning at Churchill Downs in advance of their dates next Friday in the Grade I Longines Oaks.

**Explora**, who'll go the nine furlongs of the Oaks with champion jockey **Flavien Prat** on her back, was out at 5:45 a.m. with exercise rider Humbeto Gomez at the controls. She galloped a mile and a quarter and "felt good," according to her pilot.

Bottle of Rouge also went a mile and a quarter, though she did it during the special 7:15 to 7:30 special training time for Derby and Oaks horses with exercise rider **Talia Viscusi** doing the driving. Hall of Famer **Mike Smith** is scheduled to be aboard the daughter of **Vino Rosso** come Friday.

**BROOKLYN BLONDE/MEANING** – The duo of soph fillies who train out of **Michael McCarthy's** Barn 27 on the Churchill Downs backside merely walked the shedrow Saturday morning after both had turned in works Friday leading up to potential starts in next Friday's Run for the Lillies.

**Meaning**, who races for **Brindlewood Farm** and **Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners**, is a go for the nine-furlong classic and she'll be handled by the top California rider **Juan Hernandez**. "**Brooklyn**," who flies the silks of **Sun-Kissed Stables** and **Bobby Flay**, made the Oaks field as of entry time and will be ridden by **Kazushi Kimura**.

McCarthy was asked how his two lassies had come out of their exercises from the day before. "No complaints," he noted.

**COUNTING STARS/SEARCH PARTY** – The **Mark Casse**-trained Oaks duo of **West Point Thoroughbreds' Counting Stars** and **Tracy Farmer's Search Party** returned to the track a little before 6 a.m. to jog for 15 minutes in the mile chute.

**Search Party**, who had **Elver Vargas** up this morning, worked a half-mile in :47.60 on Thursday and **Counting Stars**, who had **Froylan Garcia** aboard today, worked a half in :48.60 on Thursday. Both walked the shedrow Friday.

**DAZZLING DAME** – **Respect the Valleys, Medallion Racing** and **Madaket Stables' Dazzling Dame**, returning to Churchill Downs for the first time since finishing fourth in last September's **Pocahonas (GIII)**, jogged a mile under exercise rider **Emma Wolfe**.

**LORELEI LEE** – **Bourbonette Oaks (Listed)** winner **Lorelei Lee** will bypass the Kentucky Oaks and instead run in the \$600,000 **Edgewood** presented by **Accenture (GII)**.

**MY MISS MO** – **Averill Racing, Mathis Stable** and **Tristan De Meric's My Miss Mo** arrived at Churchill Downs from Gulfstream Park Saturday morning following an overnight van ride.

Trainer **Saffie Joseph Jr.** is scheduled to arrive in Louisville on Sunday.

**PARADISE/PROM QUEEN** – **Gary and Mary West's Prom Queen** walked trainer **Brad Cox's** shedrow Saturday morning and expected to go back to the track Sunday.

Gazelle (GIII) third-place finisher **Paradise** will not enter the Kentucky Oaks, according to **Cox**.

**PASHMINA** – **Red White and Blue Racing's Pashmina** worked a half-mile in :49.60 with **Jesse Sauter** aboard for trainer **Rob Atlas**.

"The track was kind of deep and sticky, but she did it easy," **Sauter** said.

**Atlas** was pleased with the work from **Pashmina**, whose Oaks appearance will mark a fifth track at which she has raced.

"I thought she worked great," **Atlas** said. "She got going at the four and a half and he let her pick it up down the lane.

"She's been all over," **Atlas** added regarding **Pashmina's** travels that have taken her to **Keeneland, Fair Grounds, Sunland Park** and **Aqueduct**. "I think that helps coming to a new track that she has done well before."

**PERCY'S BAR** – Hat Creek Racing's **Percy's Bar** arrived at Churchill Downs at 8:30 Saturday morning after leaving her home base at Keeneland for trainer **Ben Colebrook**.

**SHE BE SMOOTH/ZANY** – Calumet Farm's **She Be Smooth** and Repole Stable's **Zany** arrived at Churchill Downs at 2:45 Saturday morning after departing Palm Beach Downs in South Florida at 8:20 Friday morning.

However, trainer **Todd Pletcher** did not enter **She Be Smooth** in the Oaks.

"I didn't feel she was ready," Pletcher said.

**SHAPING UP: The \$5 MILLION LONGINES KENTUCKY OAKS** – Here is the top 14 preference list for the \$1.5 million Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI) in alphabetical order (with jockey and trainer): **Always a Runner** (Jose Ortiz, Chad Brown), **Bella Ballerina** (Tyler Gaffalione, Brendan Walsh), **Bottle of Rouge** (Mike Smith, Bob Baffert), **Brooklyn Blonde** (Kazushi Kimura, Michael McCarthy), **Counting Stars** (Francisco Arrieta, Mark Casse), **Dazzling Dame** (Luis Saez, Brittany Russell) **Explora** (Flavien Prat, Bob Baffert), **Meaning** (Juan Hernandez, Michael McCarthy), **My Miss Mo** (Micah Husbands, Saffie Joseph Jr.), **Pashmina** (Ramon Vazquez, Rob Atras), **Percy's Bar** (Luan Machado, Ben Colebrook), **Prom Queen** (Javier Castellano, Brad Cox), **Search Party** (Cristian Torres, Mark Casse), **She Be Smooth** (John Velazquez, Todd Pletcher), **Zany** (Irad Ortiz Jr., Todd Pletcher).

**KENTUCKY DERBY, OAKS MORNING WORKOUTS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC THURSDAY, APRIL 23 THROUGH WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29** – Starting Thursday and continuing through Wednesday, April 29, Churchill Downs will be open free-of-charge daily from 6:45-10 a.m. so guests can watch the nation's top 3-year-old Thoroughbreds train toward their engagements in this year's Kentucky Derby and Kentucky Oaks during Dawn at the Downs.

Horses train on Churchill Downs' main track daily from 5:15-10 a.m. There is an exclusive training window only for Derby and Oaks participants from 7:15-7:30 a.m. following the 6:45-7:15 a.m. renovation break. Those horses will be identified by special saddle towels that include their names: yellow saddle towels for Derby horses and pink saddle towels for Oaks contenders.

Guests can park for free in the Yellow Lot off Longfield Ave. (all vehicles must be removed by 10:30 a.m.) and enter Churchill Downs through the Clubhouse Gate. Guests will be directed to Sections 115-117 to watch the morning workouts.

On Monday, fans can enjoy a premium breakfast in Millionaires Row or the Stakes Room for Dawn at the Downs Dining. Tickets and more information can be found at [www.kentuckyderby.com/visit/derby-week-events/dawn-at-the-downs/](http://www.kentuckyderby.com/visit/derby-week-events/dawn-at-the-downs/)

The 152<sup>nd</sup> runnings of the \$1.5 Longines Kentucky Oaks (Grade I) and \$5 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (GI) will be held Friday, May 1 and

Saturday, May 2, respectively. Opening Day of Derby Week and the 44-day Spring Meet is Saturday at 12:45 p.m.

**KENTUCKY DERBY MORNING WORKS SHOW CONTINUES THROUGH THURSDAY** – The Kentucky Derby Morning Works Show presented by TwinSpires.com continues through Thursday, April 30, offering fans an exclusive look at the final preparations of Kentucky Derby and Kentucky Oaks contenders.

Airing daily from 6:45-7:45 a.m. (all times Eastern), the one-hour program will be streamed live on the Kentucky Derby [Facebook Page](#), [YouTube](#) and X accounts. The show will highlight the 15-minute exclusive training window from 7:15-7:30 a.m. for horses preparing for the \$5 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (Grade I) and the \$1.5 million Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI).

Hosted by Churchill Downs' expert handicappers **Joe Kristufek**, **Kaitlin Benson**, **Tony Calo** and **Kevin Kilroy**, the show will include insight, commentary and exclusive interviews from notable figures such as the voice of the Kentucky Derby **Travis Stone**, former leading rider **Rosie Napravnik**, TwinSpires.com handicapper **James Scully**, Churchill Downs morning line oddsmaker **Nick Tammaro** and racing analyst **Ren Carrothers**.

All Kentucky Derby and Oaks contenders are required to be on-site by Saturday, April 25. The show will continue through Wednesday, April 30, showcasing every contender's final training sessions leading into Kentucky Derby and Longines Kentucky Oaks.

For more information, visit [www.kentuckyderby.com](http://www.kentuckyderby.com).

**KENTUCKY DERBY NEWSFEED MEDIA PORTAL** – The Kentucky Derby Newsfeed will be providing a media portal to access high quality video and audio files. Files are 1080 59.94p and will be uploaded on a daily basis.

This service is available via any web browser. To access, type the following into your web browser address bar: [kyderby.hammondcg.com](http://kyderby.hammondcg.com)

When you get to the media portal page, you will be prompted to enter credentials to access and download training footage, b-roll, color, interviews and press conferences.

**Username: kyderby2026**

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For further information, inquires or to report technical difficulties, please contact Jesse B. Kelsey, Vice-President of Hammond Communications Group, Inc. at (859) 492-5768 or at [jkelsey@hammondcg.com](mailto:jkelsey@hammondcg.com).

**COADY MEDIA KENTUCKY DERBY COVERAGE** – Here is the link to access Coady Media's daily photo coverage of the Kentucky Derby and Kentucky Oaks morning training, along with race day coverage: <https://www.coadyplus.com/gallery-collection/152nd-Kentucky-Derby/C0000KUCsBDLVdJ4>.

Please credit photos: Coady Media

**KENTUCKY DERBY MEDIA GUIDE** – For the updated 2026 Kentucky Derby Media Guide, visit: [www.kentuckyderby.com/media-guide-info/](http://www.kentuckyderby.com/media-guide-info/)

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